DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 410 039 PS 025 715

AUTHOR DeLude, Cindy; And Others
TITLE Improving Student Social Skills through the Use of Cooperative Learning.
PUB DATE May 97
NOTE 87p.; Action Research Project, Saint Xavier University and IRI Skylight Field-Based Master's Program.
PUB TYPE Dissertations/Theses - Masters Theses (042) -- Reports - Evaluative (142)
EDRS PRICE MF01/PC04 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Behavior Problems; Check Lists; *Cooperative Learning; Elementary Secondary Education; Group Dynamics; *Interpersonal Competence; Intervention; Observation; Program Effectiveness; Social Behavior; *Social Development; Student Attitudes; *Student Behavior
IDENTIFIERS Teacher Journals

ABSTRACT

This study evaluated the impact of a program for improving group functioning through reducing the frequency of inappropriate student behavior. Participating were 160 students in grades 3, 7, 10, and 11 from a primary school, a junior high, and 3 high schools. All of the subject schools were in low- to upper-middle class communities located in five suburbs of Chicago (Illinois). Inappropriate group behavior included speaking out of turn; failing to share thoughts, ideas, and materials; and the lack of positive peer reinforcement. Formal cooperative skills instruction, reinforcement of social skills, management strategies, and integration of cooperative skills into the content areas of mathematics, science, and social studies were used to develop the social skills of taking turns, sharing thoughts and ideas, sharing materials, expressing encouragement, and not using put downs. Cooperative activities such as role play, T-charts, and team projects were used at least twice weekly with groups of three to six students of mixed gender, ability, and diverse backgrounds. The impact of these interventions was assessed through teacher journals, teacher observation checklists, student surveys, and group processing rubrics following each cooperative learning activity. Results indicated that cooperative learning instruction and activities improved group functioning and reduced the frequency of inappropriate behavior. Data from students' group processing rubrics substantiated increases in the use of positive social skills at each of the five targeted schools. Teacher observation checklists also revealed increases in social skills but not as consistently as the student data. (Appendices include descriptions of cooperative activities and sample lesson plans. Contains 26 references.) (Author/KB)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

1

PS

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION
CENTER (ERIC)
X This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

ED 410 039

IMPROVING STUDENT SOCIAL SKILLS THROUGH THE USE OF COOPERATIVE LEARNING

Cindy DeLude
Shelly Fagerson
Linda Gruchot
Sandy Keating
Kristin Slovey

An Action Research Project Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the School of Education in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in Teaching and Leadership

Saint Xavier University & IRI Skylight
Field-Based Masters Program
Chicago, Illinois

May, 1997

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
Cindy DeLude
Shelly Fagerson
Linda Gruchot
Sandy Keating
Kristin Slovey
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

PS 025715

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

SIGNATURE PAGE

This project was approved by

Holly D. Mackley
Advisor

B Burns Ed.D.
Advisor

Beverly Hulley
Dean, School of Education

ABSTRACT

This report describes a program for improving group functioning in order to reduce the frequency of inappropriate behavior, due to a lack of social skills. The targeted population consisted of a primary, a junior high, and three high schools in low to upper-middle class communities located in five suburbs of Chicago. The problems of inappropriate behavior and lack of social skills were documented through the use of group processing rubrics, teacher observation checklists, teacher journals and student surveys.

Analysis of probable cause data revealed that students have an inability to work in a group. This appeared to be related to societal changes as described by the media, culturally diverse communities with unclear values, and the failure to address social skills within the curriculum.

A review of solution strategies suggested by experts in the field, combined with an analysis of the problem, resulted in the following interventions: cooperative skill instruction and the integration of cooperative skills into content areas.

As a result of the interventions, cooperative learning improved group functioning and reduced the frequency of inappropriate behavior. The use of positive social skills increased at each of the five targeted schools.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1 - PROBLEM STATEMENT AND CONTEXT....1

Problem Statement....1

Immediate Problem Context....1

The Surrounding Community....10

Regional and National Context of the Problem....13

CHAPTER 2 - PROBLEM DOCUMENTATION....15

Problem Evidence....15

Probable Causes....25

CHAPTER 3 - THE SOLUTION STRATEGY....32

Literature Review....32

Project Outcomes and Solution Components....35

Project Objectives and Processes....35

Action Plan for the Intervention....36

Methods of Assessment....39

CHAPTER 4 - PROJECT RESULTS....41

Historical Description of the Intervention....41

Presentation and Analysis of Results....43

Conclusions and Recommendations....62

REFERENCES....65

APPENDIXES....67

Appendix A....67

Appendix B....68

Appendix C....70

Appendix D....72

Appendix E....74

Appendix F....76

Appendix G....77

Appendix H....78

Appendix I....79

CHAPTER 1

PROBLEM STATEMENT AND CONTEXT

Problem Statement

The students of the targeted 3rd-, 7th-, 10th-, and 11th-grade classes exhibited inappropriate behaviors which interfered with effective group functioning. Behaviors such as speaking out of turn; failure to share thoughts, ideas, and materials; and lack of positive peer reinforcement have been observed. Evidence for this problem was gathered from teacher journals, teacher observations of student behaviors, student surveys and group processing rubrics.

Immediate Problem Context

School A

School A is one of three public elementary schools in a southwestern suburb of Cook County. It houses 385 students from early childhood through fifth grade. The average class size is 25.2 students with a $3,970 operating expenditure per pupil. The student population is characterized as 96.1% European American, 2.5% African American, 0.8% Hispanic, 0.6% Asian/Pacific Islander, and 0.0% Native American.

From the 385 students' records surveyed, 298 students live with both parents, 22% live with a single parent, 1% live with a legal guardian, and 0.3% live in a foster home. Seventeen children attend day care before and/or after school. The majority

of the parents have completed high school, 57%, while an additional 17% have attended two years of college. Twenty-two percent of the parents completed four years of college or more.

Of the 385 students, 13.3% are from low-income families receiving public aid, living in institutions for neglected or delinquent children, being supported in foster homes with public funds, or eligible to receive free or reduced price lunches. Just over 2% of the students are limited English proficient who are eligible for bilingual education.

The daily attendance rate is 95.4%. The school has experienced a 10% mobility rate. Chronic truants are reported as 0.0%.

School A has a relatively established faculty. Eighteen of the 26 teachers have ten years experience or more. The largest influx of new teachers was in 1969-70. Ten of the teachers have completed a master's degree and seven have hours past a bachelor's degree. Presently, six teachers are working towards their master's degrees.

School A employs additional staff for specialized education. The school has one teacher in each of the following areas: speech, technology, music, art, physical education and reading. The school has one social worker, one librarian and five teacher aides.

Within the 385 student population, several subgroups have been identified as in need of additional services outside of the regular-education classroom. Of these, 7% are serviced within a self-contained setting while 218 students are serviced through an academic support service or enrichment program. The breakdown is as follows:

Title I Reading Program	8%
Title I Math Program	2%
Learning Disabilities/Behavior Disorders	5%
Speech/Language	16%
Social Work/Counseling	5%
English as a Second Language	4%
Rainbows (program for children of divorced parents)	6%
Gifted/Challenge	6%

Approximately one half of these children receive services from multiple subgroups. Approximately seven of School A's potential students received early intervention services through the districts K.A.R.E. program (District Prekindergarten At-Risk Program).

All students receive five hours of daily instruction: math, reading, science, social studies and language arts. Each student also takes physical education three days a week for the entire school year. The students also attend art, music and technology classes three times a week for one-third of the school year.

School B

School B is the sole junior high school of a public school district that includes a total of four elementary schools. It is in a southwestern suburb of Cook County. The school houses 271 students from grades 7 and 8. The average class size is 17 students with a $5,353 operating expenditure per pupil. The student population is characterized as 34.3% European American, 14.0% African American, 49.8% Hispanic, 1.5% Asian/Pacific Islander, and 0.4% Native American.

Students from low-income families make up 27.7% of School B's

population. Low-income refers to those families receiving public aid, living in institutions for neglected or delinquent children, being supported in foster homes with public funds, or eligible to receive free or reduced price lunches. The daily attendance rate is 94.5%. The school has experienced a 15.8% mobility rate. Chronic truants are reported as 0.0%.

School B has an established faculty which is made up of 14 classroom teachers, one librarian, three learning disability teachers, one speech therapist, one guidance counselor, one school nurse, one Chapter One teacher, and one bilingual education teacher. The average teaching experience is 13.9 years. Thirty-two percent of the teachers have completed a master's degree or above.

School B serves all or large portions of two communities which are basically blue collar and which range from low-poverty to middle-income levels both within and between those communities. Both communities are composed completely or include large percentages of minority families.

Within the 271 student population, several subgroups have been identified as in need of additional services outside of the regular education classroom. The breakdown is as follows:

Title I	8%
Limited English Proficient	9%

All students receive 5 1/2 hours of instruction a day which includes math, reading, science, history/social studies, language arts, life skills and physical education. A social skills class consists of silent sustained reading for three days and study skills for two days a week.

School C

School C is one of two high schools in a public school district. It is in a northwestern suburb of Cook County. School C houses 1,919 students. The average class size is 22.5 students with a $10,723 operating expenditure per pupil. The student population is characterized as 62.0% European American, 1.9% African American, 5.2% Hispanic, 30.3% Asian/Pacific Islander, and 0.6% Native American.

Ten percent of the students are from low-income families receiving public aid, living in institutions for neglected or delinquent children, being supported in foster homes with public funds, or eligible to receive free or reduced price lunches. The daily attendance rate is 92.9%. The school has experienced a 5.8% mobility rate. Chronic truants are reported as 0.4%.

School C has an established faculty. The average teaching experience is 14.8 years. Nearly 74% of the teachers have completed a master's degree or above.

School C serves all or large portions of two communities which are basically white collar and which range from middle-to high-income levels both within and between those communities. Both of these communities are composed completely or include large percentages of European American families.

Within the 1,919 student population, several subgroups have been identified as in need of additional services outside of the regular-education classroom. The breakdown is as follows:

Gifted/Academically Talented	36%
Title I	6%
Special Education	9%
Learning Disabled	4%
EMH	1%
TMH	1%
Speech Impaired	less than 1%
Behavior Disordered	1%
Transitional Bilingual Education	28%
Limited English Proficient	26%

School C provides a broad educational program for students in grades 9 through 12. The majority of students are enrolled in a college-bound core curriculum, gifted/academically talented, vocational/technical or general education programs. The remainder of the school's population is in the "special needs" programs of Title I, special education, and English as a second language. In addition to the academic curriculum, the school provides a wide variety of extra-curricular activities.

School D

School D is one of four high schools in a public school district. It houses 163 students. It is in a southwestern suburb of Cook County. The average class size is 16.2 students with a $8,171 operating expenditure per pupil. The student population is characterized as 92.6% European American, 0.0% African American, 3.1% Hispanic, 4.3% Asian/Pacific Islander, and 0.0% Native American.

Only 3.1% of the students are from low-income families receiving public aid, living in institutions for neglected or delinquent children, being supported in foster homes with public

funds, or eligible to receive free or reduced price lunches. The daily attendance rate is 96.4%. The school has experienced a 16.8% mobility rate. Chronic truants are reported as 0.0%.

School D has an established faculty. The staff consists of: 1 principal, 12 teachers, 1 counselor and 2 secretaries. The average teaching experience is 16.9 years and 70.6% have a master's degree or above.

School D serves all or large portions of seven communities which are basically white collar and which range from low- to high-income levels both within and among those communities. All of these communities are composed completely or include large percentages of European American families. Large numbers of the communities' populations are two parent families in which education in stressed.

Within the 163 student population, several subgroups have been identified as in need of additional services outside of the regular education classroom. The breakdown is as follows:

Special Education	7%
Learning Disabled	6%
Speech Impaired	less than 1%
Limited English Proficient	less than 1%

School D is a laboratory school which is based on the philosophy of Dr. William Glasser, author of The Quality School (Glasser, 1993). This approach asks students to take more-than-traditional responsibility for their learning in courses and in the school as a whole. The students take a college-bound curriculum which includes math, English, social studies, science, foreign language, art and other electives. Students are required to earn A's and B's for credit in the courses or to keep working

until competency is reached. Extra time and assistance is given to help each student earn credit. A full-time counselor is also available. Several clubs such as student council, social committee, yearbook, newspaper, and leadership activities are offered. The students may also participate in a variety of clubs, sports, and academic activities at the three district schools.

School E

School E is one of six high schools in a public school district. It houses 1,449 students. It is in a southwestern suburb of Cook County. The average class size is 18.3 students with a $10,507 operating expenditure per pupil. The student population is characterized as 39.2% European American, 30.6% African American, 30.0% Hispanic, 0.9% Asian/Pacific Islander, and 0.3% Native American.

Nearly one-third of the students are from low-income families receiving public aid, living in institutions for neglected or delinquent children, being supported in foster homes with public funds, or eligible to receive free or reduced price lunches. The daily attendance rate is 90.7%. The school has experienced a 27.4% mobility rate. Chronic truants are reported as 1.7%.

School E has an established faculty. The staff consists of 139 members: 1 principal, 1 associate principal, 3 assistant principals, 1 dean, 113 teachers, 9 counselors, 2 social workers, 1 psychiatrist, 1 nurse, 6 teachers' aides, 8 secretaries and 4 security staff members. The average teaching experience is 17.6 years. Seventy-five percent of the teachers have completed a master's degree or above.

School E serves all or large portions of five communities which are basically blue collar and which range from low-poverty

level to middle-income levels both within and among those communities. Three of these communities are composed completely or include large percentages of minority groups. The other two are predominantly white communities. This diverse socioeconomic profile, plus the near proximity of the city of Chicago with all its existing problems, has an extensive impact on the students' learning levels and rates. Large numbers of the communities' populations are single parent families which often include children not living with even one biological parent. Low incomes, which demand taking on more full time jobs, and variable work schedules often mean less parental supervision. The communities' adult population typically places more emphasis on working than school. All these considerations greatly affect the skill levels, academic background, expectations, demands, needs and priorities that students individually bring to the learning setting at school E.

Within the 1,449 student population, several subgroups have been identified as in need of additional services outside of the regular education classroom. The breakdown is as follows:

Gifted/Academically Talented	7%
Title I	20%
Special Education	11%
Learning Disabled	5%
EMH	2%
TMH	2%
Speech Impaired	less than 1%
Behavior Disordered	less than 1%
Transitional Bilingual Education	5%
Limited English Proficient	5%
General Education	20%

School E provides a broad educational program for students in grades 9 through 12. The majority of students are enrolled in college-bound core curriculum, gifted-academically talented, vocational-technical or general education programs. The remainder of the school's population is in the "special needs" programs of Title I, special education, or limited English proficient. In addition to the academic curriculum, the school provides a wide variety of extra-curricular activities.

The Surrounding Community

Community A

School District A is governed by the Board of Education which has seven members, elected by the voters of the district, on a term rotational basis. The district is administered by the Superintendent of Schools and his staff consisting of a Director of Curriculum, building principals and their respective assistants and/or administrative aides. The district includes four separate school buildings.

With a current population of 26,816, community A has approximately 9,123 households. The median home value in the community is approximately $65,615. The average age of persons living in the community is 33.5. The population is 50% male and 50% female. The population is 94.6% European American, 3.2% African American, 1.9% Hispanic, and 2.2% other. The median income per family is $56,793, with the median per capita income being $11,270.

Community B

School District B is governed by the Board of Education which has seven members, elected by the voters of the district, on a term rotational basis. The district is administered by the Superintendent of Schools and his staff consisting of a Coordinator of Instructional Programs and Special Projects, building principals and their respective assistants and/or administrative aides. The district includes four separate school buildings.

With a current population of 9,971, community B has approximately 3,514 households. The median home value in the community is approximately $71,600. The average age of persons living in the community is 30.4. The population is 50% male and 50% female. The population is 57.0% European American, 13.0% African American, and 30.0% Hispanic. The median income per family is $31,367, with the median per capita income being $10,400.

Community C

School District C is governed by the Board of Education which has 7 members, elected by the voters of the district, on a term rotational basis. The district is administered by the

Superintendent of Schools and her staff consisting of an Assistant Superintendent, Director of Curriculum, Business Office Manager, Public Relations Director, Information Services Director, Buildings and Grounds Director, Off-Campus Learning Center Coordinator, building principals and their respective directors of instruction and/or administrative aides. The district includes two separate school buildings.

With a current population of 59,432, community C has approximately 22,747 households. The median home value in the community is approximately $148,800. The average age of persons living in the community is 41.4. The population is 50% male and 50% female. The population is 79.0% European American, 2.0% African American, 4.0% Hispanic, 15.0% Asian/Pacific Islander. The median income per family is $49,489, with the median per capita income being $20,595.

Community D

School District D is governed by the Board of Education which has six members, elected by the voters of the district, on a term rotational basis. The district is administered by the Superintendent of Schools and his staff consisting of a Director of Curriculum, two assistant superintendents, building principals and their respective directors of instruction and/or administrative aides. The district includes four separate school buildings.

With a current population of 11,478, community D has approximately 11,421 households. The median home value in the community is approximately $186,993. The average age of persons living in the community is 42. The population is 50% male and 50% female. The population is 97.1% European American, 2.3%

Asian/Pacific Islander, and 1.6% other. The median income per family is $77,364, with the median per capita income being $18,200.

Community E

School District E is governed by the Board of Education which has seven members, elected by the voters of the District, on a term rotational basis. The District is administered by the Superintendent of Schools and his staff consisting of a Director of Curriculum, building principals and their respective assistants and/or administrative aides. The district includes six separate school buildings.

With a current population of 21,203, community E has approximately 7,898 households. The median home value in the community is approximately $64,100. The average age of persons living in the community is 31.7. The population is 50% male and 50% female. The population is 60.9% European American, 14.0% African American, 24.0% Hispanic, and 1.1% other. The median income per family is $34,179, with the median per capita income being $11,845.

Regional and National Context of Problem

Children in today's society are exhibiting poor social skills. According to Pirrello this was "evidenced by lapses in self-discipline and by incidence of inappropriate behavior as noted by teacher observations and anecdotal records" (p. 12, 1994). This study determined that these problems existed because students are not exposed to appropriate social skills (Pirrello, 1994). Social skills, as defined by Johnson, Johnson, and Holubec (1990), are the interpersonal and small group skills that are needed to interact effectively with others. Children are not born

instinctively knowing how to do this. Interpersonal and group skills do not magically appear the first time children and adolescents are placed in contact with others (Johnson & Johnson, 1990). Student social skills are significant because they are one key to a successful and productive future.

A task force on "School and Community Safety" formed by the Evanston Township High School Board of Education indicates "there is a declining civility in our communities." (Chicago Tribune, 1996) Pressure from society and from peers influences students' behavior both positively and negatively. Some of the negative results of this behavior are drug abuse, gangs, violence, and teen pregnancy. Children often lack good role models and what they are being taught often encourages individualism at the expense of getting along with others (Johnston, 1995). When children are taught to focus on individuality, the result is that they may have difficulty functioning in a group setting. Therefore, children often lack the necessary skills to get along with others.

CHAPTER 2

PROBLEM DOCUMENTATION

Problem Evidence

In order to document the problem of inappropriate behavior which interfered with effective group functioning, teacher observation checklists were used by the researchers to record the average number of incidents of the targeted social skills which were observed during a forty minute class period (Appendix A). The student surveys were given to the students as an evaluation to indicate the students' perceptions of the groups' use of the five targeted skills (Appendix B). The observation and evaluation data were collected during the first two weeks of the study among five classes involving 160 students: 58 from School A, 27 from School B, 33 from School C, 14 from School D, and 28 from School E. The results are recorded in Figures 1 through 6.

The teacher observation checklists were used with randomly selected students to record the average number of incidents of the targeted social skills. The researchers recorded the average number of incidents that the students used the targeted social skills in a forty minute class period. The data from the teacher observation checklists for each school were collected twice a week for an average period of forty minutes during the first two weeks. This information served as baseline information. The results are presented in Figure 1.

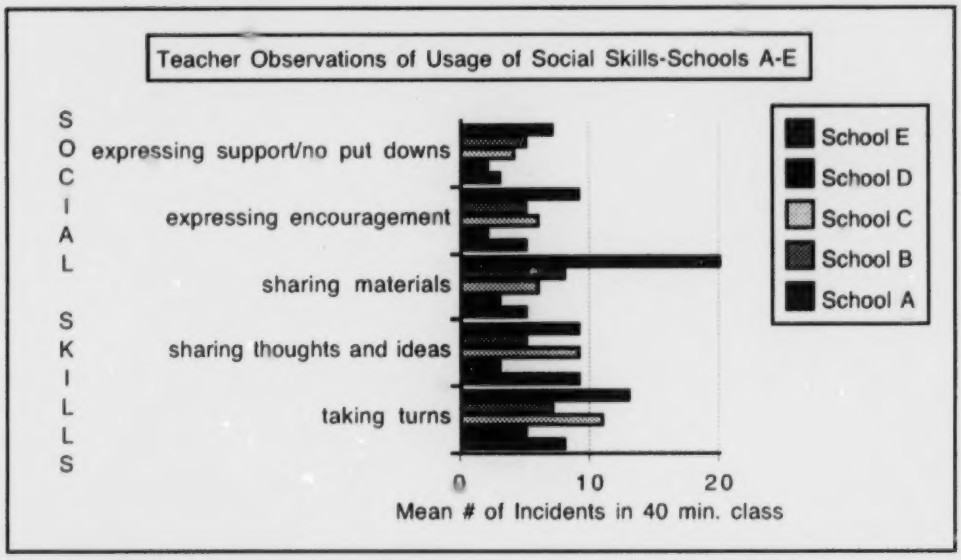

Figure 1: Teacher Observations of Incidents of Students' Usage of Social Skills - Schools A, B, C, D, E.

The student surveys allowed students to evaluate the effectiveness of their groups' functioning. The surveys were used as a pre-evaluation to identify students' perceptions of the use of the targeted social skills. Students indicated whether they strongly agreed, agreed, disagreed or strongly disagreed that: everyone in the group participated equally, shared their thoughts and ideas with the rest of the group, shared materials, did not use put downs, gave positive comments to other group members and took turns speaking. The researchers recorded the group responses from the pre-evaluation which are presented in Figures 2 through 6. The recorded results reinforce the researchers' observations regarding students' lack of social skills.

Teachers at the five targeted schools observed their students while working in groups to identify the use of the targeted social skills. Figure 1 indicates that the frequency of the use of sharing materials, sharing thoughts and ideas, and taking turns in class were observed more often than expressing encouragement and

using no put downs.

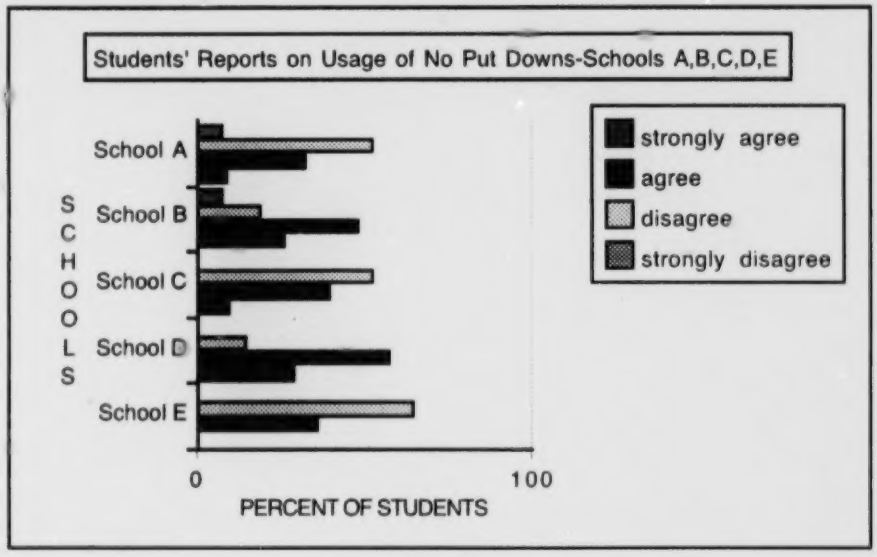

Figure 2: Students' Reports of Usage of Put Downs-Schools A, B, C, D, E.

The 160 students at the five targeted schools were asked to indicate whether they strongly agreed, agreed, disagreed, or strongly disagreed that no put downs were used while working in groups. Figure 2 indicates, in School A, where 58 students participated in the project, that 8.6% strongly agreed, 32.8% agreed, 51.8% disagreed, and 6.8% strongly disagreed. In School B, where 27 students participated in the project, 25.9% strongly agreed, 48.2% agreed, 18.5% disagreed, 7.4% strongly disagreed. In School C, where 33 students participated in the project, 9.1% strongly agreed, 39.4% agreed, 51.5% disagreed, and 0% strongly disagreed. In School D, where 14 students participated in the project, 28.5% strongly agreed, 57.2% agreed, 14.3% disagreed, 0% strongly disagreed. In School E, where 28 students participated

in the project, 0% strongly agreed, 35.7% agreed, 64.3% disagreed, and 0% strongly disagreed. It is clear from the data shown in Figure 2 that this is a social skill that a majority of the students at the five targeted schools need to develop.

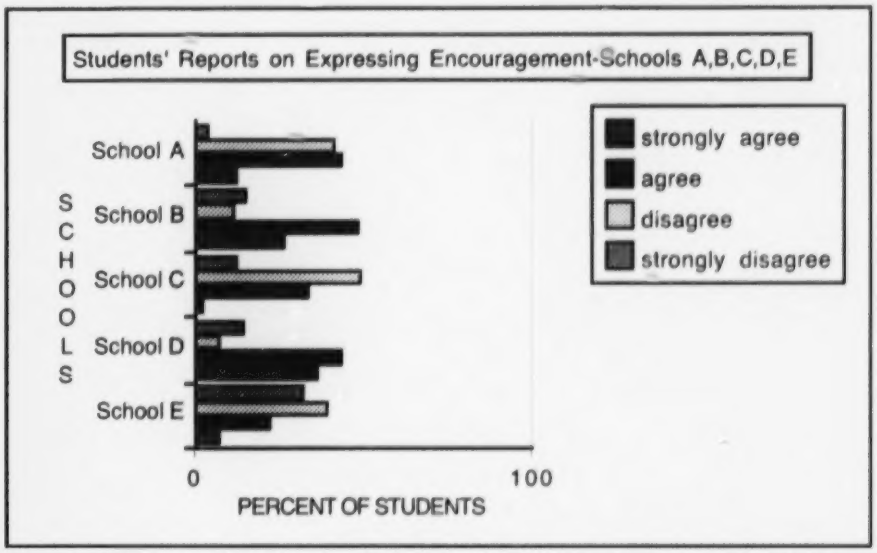

Figure 3: Students' Reports of Expressing Encouragement-Schools A, B, C, D, E.

The 160 students at the five targeted schools were asked to indicate whether they strongly agreed, agreed, disagreed, or strongly disagreed that encouragement was expressed while working in groups. Figure 3 indicates, in School A, where 58 students participated in the project, 12.1% strongly agreed, 43.1% agreed, 41.4% disagreed, and 3.4% strongly disagreed. In School B, where 27 students participated in the project, 26% strongly agreed, 48% agreed, 11% disagreed, 15% strongly disagreed. In School C, where 33 students participated in the project, 6% strongly agreed, 33% agreed, 49% disagreed, and 12% strongly disagreed. In School D, where 14 students participated in the project, 36%

strongly agreed, 43% agreed, 7% disagreed, 14% strongly disagreed. In School E, where 28 students participated in the project, 7% strongly agreed, 22% agreed, 39% disagreed, and 32% strongly disagreed. Of the 41 students surveyed at Schools B and D, 76% felt that positive support was shown in the group. Of the 61 students surveyed at Schools C and E, 66% responded that there was a lack of positive reinforcement from their peers. Students at School A had mixed opinions. More than half of the students felt positive support was shown within the group, while 45% felt this support was lacking.

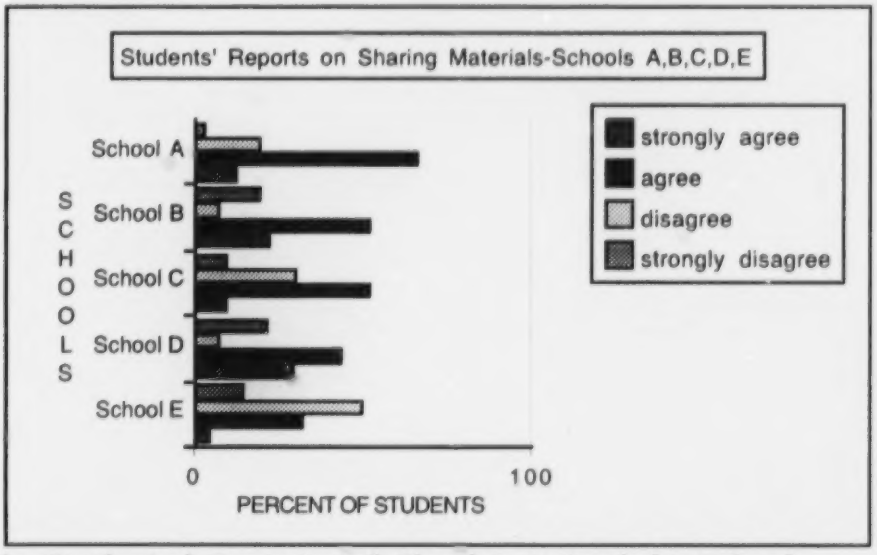

Figure 4: Students' Reports of Sharing Materials-Schools A,B,C,D,E.

The 160 students at the five targeted schools were asked to indicate whether they strongly agreed, agreed, disagreed, or strongly disagreed that materials were shared while working in groups. Figure 4 indicates, in School A, where 58 students participated in the project, 12% strongly agreed, 66% agreed,

19% disagreed, and 3% strongly disagreed. In School B, where 27 students participated in the project, 22% strongly agreed, 52% agreed, 7% disagreed, 19% strongly disagreed. In School C, where 33 students participated in the project, 9.1% strongly agreed, 51.5% agreed, 30.3% disagreed, and 9.1% strongly disagreed. In School D, where 14 students participated in the project, 29% strongly agreed, 43% agreed, 7% disagreed, 21% strongly disagreed. In School E, where 28 students participated in the project, 4% strongly agreed, 32% agreed, 50% disagreed, and 14% strongly disagreed. Of the 160 students surveyed at all schools 65% indicated that sharing did not take place.

The 160 students at the five targeted schools were asked to indicate whether they strongly agreed, agreed, disagreed, or strongly disagreed that thoughts and ideas were shared while working in groups. Figure 5 indicates, in School A, where students participated in the project, 7% strongly agreed, 43% agreed, 45% disagreed, and 5% strongly disagreed. In School B, where 27 students participated in the project, 11.1% strongly agreed, 77.8% agreed, 7.4% disagreed, 3.7% strongly disagreed. In School C, where 33 students participated in the project, 6.1% strongly agreed, 45.5% agreed, 36.4% disagreed, and 12.1% strongly disagreed. In School D, where 14 students participated in the project, 29% strongly agreed, 57% agreed, 14% disagreed, 0% strongly disagreed. In School E, where 28 students participated in the project, 7.1% strongly agreed, 42.9% agreed, 39.3% disagreed, and 10.7% strongly disagreed. Results regarding sharing thoughts and ideas within the group indicate varied

responses. Of the 41 students surveyed at Schools B and D, 88% agreed that sharing occurs within their group, as opposed to the 119 students surveyed at Schools A, C and E where 50% reported that sharing does not occur within the group.

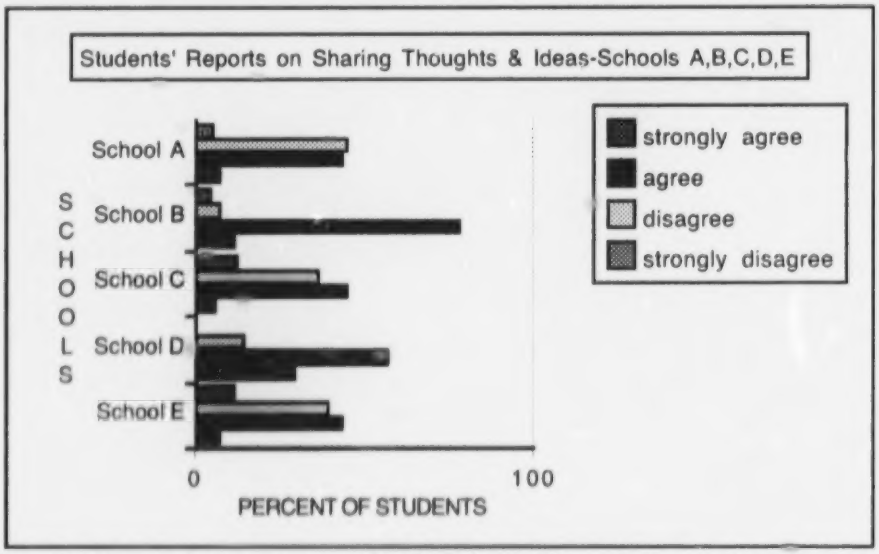

Figure 5: Students' Reports of Sharing Thoughts and Ideas-Schools A,B,C,D,E.

The 160 students at the five targeted schools were asked to indicate whether they strongly agreed, agreed, disagreed, or strongly disagreed that students were taking turns while working in groups. Figure 6 shows, in School A, where 58 students participated in the project, 8.6% strongly agreed, 43.1% agreed, 41.4% disagreed, and 6.9% strongly disagreed. In School B, where 27 students participated in the project, 14.8% strongly agreed, 74.1% agreed, 7.4% disagreed, 3.7% strongly disagreed. In School C, where 33 students participated in the project, 6.1% strongly agreed, 48.5% agreed, 33.3% disagreed, and 12.1% strongly disagreed. In School D, where 14 students participated in the

project, 28.6% strongly agreed, 57.1% agreed, 14.3% disagreed, 0% strongly disagreed. In School E, where 28 students participated in the project, 7.1% strongly agreed, 53.6% agreed, 25% disagreed, and 14.3% strongly disagreed.Of the 160 students surveyed at all five schools 63% reported that the students take turns within their groups. On the other hand, 37% reported that taking turns did not happen. The mixed results at each school show reinforcement and instruction is needed in this area.

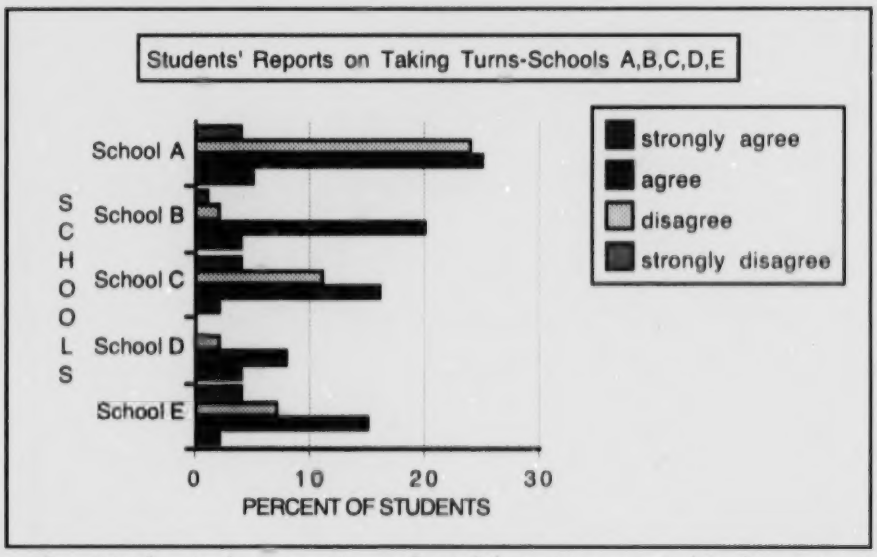

Figure 6: Students' Reports of Taking Turns-Schools A,B,C,D,E.

A review of the data from the student surveys indicated that the social skills observed the least were expressing support/no put downs and sharing materials. Students at all five schools indicated that support was not expressed very often during cooperative lessons. In addition, 65% of the students surveyed, at all five schools, indicated that sharing materials was not a strong social skill. Students at Schools C and E indicated, by their survey results, that students were not giving positive comments to other group members very often.

Schools A, C, and E showed higher incidences of negative behavior in all but one of the social skill areas. In the analysis of the students' surveys, grade levels of the students did not make a difference. These schools did not share a common grade level, organizational patterns, or school size. The mix of economic and ethnic diversity was also not a factor.

The final assessment that the researchers used was a group-processing rubric (Appendix C). At the conclusion of the first cooperative group activity in September, group processing rubrics were distributed to students for a group evaluation of the use of the five targeted skills. At four of the schools, students were asked to rate their group on each skill using a range of "0" to "3" with "3" indicating positive demonstration of the skill and "0" indicating that students saw a need for improvement in this skill. At School A, students were asked to rate their group on each skill using a range of "1" to "3" with "3" indicating positive demonstration of the skill and "1" indicating that students saw a need for improvement in this skill. The results are described in the following paragraphs.

The results of the September group processing rubric for School A show that 7% of the students felt that they took turns and 21% of the students felt that they shared thoughts and ideas. The results also indicated 55% of the students shared materials, and 16% of the students expressed encouragement.

The results of the September group processing rubric for School B show that 44% of the students felt that they took turns and 44% of the students felt that they shared thoughts and ideas. The results also indicated 48% of the students shared materials, 19% of the students expressed encouragement and 33% of the

students expressed support.

The results of the September group processing rubric for School C show that 40% of the students felt that they took turns and 37% of the students felt that they shared thoughts and ideas. The results also indicated 30% of the students shared materials, 47% of the students expressed encouragement and 33% of the students expressed support.

The results of the September group processing rubric for School D show that 36% of the students felt that they took turns and 36% of the students felt that they shared thoughts and ideas. The results also indicated 71% of the students shared materials, 0% of the students expressed encouragement and 0% of the students expressed support.

The results of the September group processing rubric for School E show that 50% of the students felt that they took turns and 46% of the students felt that they shared thoughts and ideas. The results also indicated 36% of the students shared materials, 50% of the students expressed encouragement and 39% of the students expressed support.

A review of the data from the teacher observation checklists indicates that the social skills observed the least were expressing support/no put downs and expressing encouragement. Teacher observations of randomly selected students at School A indicate that students are not expressing support very frequently. Teacher observations of randomly selected students at School B indicate that students are not expressing support or encouragement very frequently. In addition, students at School B are not sharing thoughts and ideas frequently. Teacher observations of randomly selected students at School C, D, and E indicate that

students are not expressing support very frequently.

A review of the data from the group processing rubrics indicates that students did not express encouragement, verbal or nonverbal, about their group members' contributions. This is documented in Schools A, B and D. Data from Schools C and E indicates that all group members did not have access to the groups' materials which indicates that group members were not sharing materials. Data from the group processing rubrics from School A indicates that students were not taking turns as well as not expressing encouragement. Students from School D indicated that in addition to not expressing encouragement, they also did not give their group members helpful suggestions and/or feedback and also used put downs.

This information indicates that both the students and the teachers observed a lack of the use of the social skills expressing support, expressing encouragement and sharing materials. With this baseline information, the researchers will be able to compare this data to the data collected later in this action research project.

Probable Causes

Literature-Based Causes

There are several possible reasons for the problem of students' inability to function effectively within a group. Literature-based data indicates the problem may be related to students' lack of social skills. This appears to be related to mixed messages of the media depicting anti-social and inappropriate behavior, culturally diverse communities with diverse and sometimes conflicting values, loss of traditional institutions, and the failure to address social skills within the

school curriculum. (Parrenas & Salazar, 1990; Elias & Clabby, 1988; Pirrello, 1994; Schaps, Solomon & Watson, 1986; Kirschenbaum, 1992; Dick, 1991; Lasley, 1987; Wayne, 1986 and Kohn, 1986)

The literature suggests several underlying causes for students' lack of social skills. Parrenas and Salazar (1990) believe that the media is one of the probable causes of inappropriate behavior. The reasons cited include the content of television programming displaying violent acts which often provide a very poor role model for social development and the portrayal of advertisements to promote products as a means of solving problems, which may lead to a decrease in conflict resolution skills. Television is a very poor substitute for caring family interaction. Elias and Clabby (1988) also see the mixed messages sent by the media, such as promotion of violence, drug, and/or alcohol abuse, as a detriment in the development of social skills, especially when positive behavior is not reinforced at home. The media can be a negative influence on our children and may contribute to antisocial behavior which interferes with the process of learning.

Culturally diverse communities with diverse and sometimes conflicting values are indicated as a second probable cause of groups being unable to work harmoniously. Literature-based research shows in the last twenty years there has been a basic transformation of our demographics. According to Parrenas and Salazar (1990), students today generally do not come to school with the same social values which were once common, such as respect, cooperation, and responsibility. The "new majority does not come to school with the same values and background as did the

old majority" (p.6). Students are not as respectful, careful, helpful or cooperative as they were twenty years ago. "The loss of pro social values and behaviors among students is a result of a number of converging economic and social factors" (Parrenas & Salazar, 1990, p.9). Our changing demography means increased racial diversity. Our schools and communities, however, are often racially insensitive and have not adopted effective practices to create positive race relations. In primary grades, children work easily in mixed racial groups, but by the end of elementary school they begin to segregate themselves along racial lines (Pirrello, 1994). This trend further develops throughout students' academic careers. When older students who have differing values and backgrounds are asked to work together, there are often misunderstandings about responsibility, cooperation, and ease of communication.

Schaps, Solomon and Watson (1986) suggest that there is a breakdown in the effectiveness of the traditional institutions of church and family. These institutions can provide both support and reinforcement of positive social behavior. Another major underlying factor of social problems is the gradual destruction of social networks; extended family, clubs, or organizations, in the community. Fundamental changes in the American family and community life affect today's children; they often lack close stable relationships with caring adults (Schaps & Solomon, 1990).

Kirschenbaum (1992) suggests that parents, religious institutions, civic leaders, youth workers and community agencies "fail to display clear values, state them in unequivocal terms, and set up a comprehensive system of rewards and punishments to reinforce the good values and extinguish the bad ones" (p. 775).

In addition, families today are much more mobile, cutting children away from the stabilizing influences of endearing neighborhood and community support systems. These changing family structures and socialization practices have resulted in students who lack values such as respect, cooperation, and responsibility (Parrenas & Salazar, 1990). As a result of changing demographics, unstable communities and families, and lack of positive role models educators are being asked to provide what society is not.

Due to concern over our country's drug problem, the disintegration of the family, teen pregnancy and other indications of social upheaval, parents, educators, and community leaders are once again calling for the schools to become involved with educating our young people about values and morals (Kirschenbaum, 1992). Literature-based research shows schools, however, do not always reflect an environment where values and morals are a priority. Instead, schools foster environments in which "students vie for attention, approval and individual achievements" (Dick, 1991, p. 179). In addition, many children do not experience important social values in their daily lives and are not able to make a strong commitment to the school community or the community at large (Schaps and Solomon, 1990).

Lasley (1987) suggests that children today are preoccupied with self. He contends that this self-centeredness has been fostered by our schools and attributes this in part to the classroom structure in which competition is rewarded. Many classroom teachers reward competition and individual achievement rather than cooperation. Studies indicate that children are leaving school without the skills necessary to hold a job, due in part to schools' failure to teach these skills (Parrenas, 1990).

According to Wayne (1986), the decline in social skills is also due to the failure of schools to reinforce moral values. Although the job has shifted from home to school, it is said that these values and skills should be modeled at home. Kohn (1986) indicates that the problem is that "such instruction is not to be found in all homes so the school may need to provide what some children will not otherwise get" (p. 499). Teachers are being asked to facilitate not only the intellectual development of students, but also their social and ethical development.

A review of probable causes gathered from literature-based evidence indicates that inappropriate behavior and a lack of social skills necessary for effective group functioning, are a direct result of mixed messages of the media depicting antisocial and inappropriate behavior, culturally diverse communities with diverse and sometimes conflicting values, a loss of traditional institutions, and the failure to address social skills within the curriculum.

Site-Based Causes

The causes cited in the literature are also reflected at the targeted sites. It is evident that students watch a great deal of television. Specifically in schools C and D, when students are asked about history, they give examples from television or movies. Teachers report that homework is not done because of watching particular television shows. Students' daily casual conversations center around television programs. In schools A, B, and E, it is clear that students experience little interaction with their families and that they are exposed to violence and antisocial behaviors introduced through the media. Therefore, the problem of

students' lack of social skills at the targeted sites is related to the overexposure of negative behaviors in the media.

Teachers at the five schools observed that student cliques are formed based on ethnic affiliations or socioeconomic status as seen in schools B, C, and E. Teachers informally report students' exposure to one another is limited due to the fact that they do not interact with children outside their cultural, economic, or social communities. Although this is not as prevalent in schools A and D, barriers between social groups still exist. When students are asked to work together, they have difficulties transcending those barriers. Students physically separate themselves from each other by moving their desks and prefer to stay within their cliques. Choosing to stay with familiar groups denies the students the opportunity to learn and experience the successful interaction of diverse individuals.

Within the targeted communities, there has been a breakdown of the traditional institutions such as families, churches, youth groups, etc. Students in today's society must tackle many problems such as divorce, drugs, peer pressure, and teen pregnancy. It is possible that at schools A through E students do not have the support and guidance that is needed to effectively deal with these pressures. Therefore, educators are being asked to help students overcome these added pressures and model the social skills which are necessary.

The role of the teacher continues to increase with the breakdown of societal institutions. Teachers in schools A through E are being called upon more and more to teach the effective social skills needed to be successful in today's society. Teachers observe a lack of cooperation, negative physical and

verbal interactions, and disrespect towards peers and adults. Students are unable to control their behavior which leads to conflict and interferes with the learning process. Because students are not coming to school with the necessary social skills, teaching social skills along with the mandated curriculum becomes another responsibility of the classroom teacher.

The probable causes for the problem of students' inability to function effectively within a group have been identified through literature-based and site-based data as stemming from a lack of social skills. The researchers conclude that this is related to mixed messages of the media depicting anti-social and inappropriate behavior, culturally diverse communities with diverse and sometimes conflicting values, loss of traditional institutions, and the failure to address social skills within the school curriculum.

CHAPTER 3

THE SOLUTION STRATEGY

Literature Review

A review of the literature on the problem of students' inappropriate behavior and inability to function effectively within a group suggested several solution strategies. One of the strategies suggested (Bailey, 1995) was to increase parent, community and school involvement to both model and teach social skills.

According to James (1982), the family is an important factor in the social and emotional development of children. If the family does not provide children with a moral framework, it may be that the only thing left is television. Since children are not given instruction on how to act appropriately, they turn to what they see on television as a model. "Young people need guidance, positive role models, and a safe, sound environment in which to learn. Since they divide most of their day almost equally between home and school it makes sense that parents and teachers forge a partnership." (Bailey, 1995, p. 35) Parents must take the time to become regularly involved with their children's learning. According to Tracy (1995), when parents are involved at school--not just at home--students do better in school and stay in school longer. Comer (1986) agrees that parent participation programs encourage appropriate behavior. So, parents and educators must

teach students how to work with the system so it can work efficiently for everyone. They must show their children by example. "By respecting each other adults can help young people assume these same attitudes when interacting with others. When children see adults using positive means to receive positive results they learn how to behave responsibly." (Bailey, 1995, p. 36) Due to the impact of outside influences, families need to take responsibility for the moral and social education of their children.

Families, schools, and community organizations all contribute to the development of students. The best results come when all three work together. According to Tracy (1995), "the community is a major stake holder in the success of its students. Schools can help the community support student success by providing the opportunity for shared responsibility." (p. 34). Kirschenbaum (1992) concurs that a concern for values and morality is back again, ". . . for these and other reasons community leaders are called on to become involved with educating our young people about values and morals." (p. 772) To the extent that these leaders are consistent in their expectations, their modeling, their norms, and their rules, a comprehensive approach has a greater likelihood of succeeding in influencing community values and morals in children and young adults. (Kirschenbaum, 1992) The community plays a key role in shaping student success and laying the foundation for a positive educational experience.

Educators who wish to increase social development and improve social skills must seek out effective teaching methods. According to Hauserman (1992), included in the vast array of effective teaching methodology is cooperative learning. In cooperative

learning, students are placed in small groups where group learning is the main focus and students are responsible not only for their own learning but also for the learning of others. Leming (1993) goes on to say that one of the most impressive success stories includes the use of cooperative learning strategies. Cooperative learning is a process for learning any content at a variety of grade levels by structuring positive interaction among students in a variety of small group patterns. Cooperative groups are usually 2-5 diverse students working toward a common goal, trying to master content; this technique is used to improve social skills. (Johnson & Johnson, 1993)

Studies show that cooperative learning can improve areas such as self-esteem, friendships, positive attitudes, and better relations across racial lines. An extensive review of the literature indicates the many positive aspects of cooperative learning which relate to social skills. Cooperative learning promotes positive peer relationships; encourages politeness, tact, loyalty and other virtues; enhances interpersonal and small group skills; improves race relations and acceptance of mainstreamed students; prepares students for an increasingly collaborative work force; improves conflict resolution skills; increases student self-esteem; and promotes character development. (Brandt, 1987; Hauserman, 1992; Johnson & Johnson, 1990; Leming, 1993; Slavin, 1991; Wynne & Walberg, 1985) These skills should be taught just as systematically as mathematics, social studies, or any other subject. Doing so requires that teachers communicate to students the need for social skills, define and model these skills, have students practice them over and over again, process how effectively students perform these skills and insure that

students integrate these skills into their daily lives. (Johnson & Johnson, 1990) Didham (1993) states, "teaching children to cooperate at school will transfer to home and play and eventually to work. Perhaps this is the most important skill we can and should teach children in today's world." (p. 27)

Project Outcomes and Solution Components

After reviewing the literature on solution strategies, the solution the writers chose was the incorporation of cooperative learning to improve group functioning.

Project Objective and Processes

As a result of the implementation of cooperative learning, during the period of September 1996 to January 1997, the 3rd-, 7th-, 10th- and 11th-grade students from the targeted classes will increase their abilities to function effectively in a group, as measured by student surveys, group processing rubrics, teacher journals, and teacher observation checklists.

In order to accomplish the project objective, the following processes were necessary:

1) Groups and materials that foster cooperative learning were developed.

2) A series of cooperative activities such as role plays, T-Charts, Team Projects, etc. that addressed social skills were developed and integrated into the content areas when appropriate.

3) Tools for student assessment of social skills were created and implemented.

Action Plan for the Intervention

1. COOPERATIVE LEARNING

A. Groups

1. Mixed gender, ability, culturally diverse
2. Size: 3-6 students
3. Task groups will be randomly chosen for each activity.
4. Formal instruction done daily by classroom teachers
    a. Introduce and model social skills
    b. Assign roles to members of each cooperative group: time keeper, recorder, reporter, facilitator, etc.
    c. Introduce a variety of cooperative group activities (see below)
    d. Facilitate group processing discussions that reinforce the objectives of the cooperative lesson

B. Social Skills (will be reinforced daily)

1. Taking turns
2. Sharing thoughts and ideas
3. Sharing materials
4. Expressing encouragement (verbal and nonverbal)
5. Using no put downs

C. Management Strategies (to be used for each activity)

1. Set goals
2. Use hand signals
3. Acknowledge put downs
4. Define group roles
5. Establish classroom rules

D. Time line and Strategies

1. Cooperative group activities to teach social skills will be scheduled at least twice a week for a 5 month period from September through January.

2. An explanation of the following activities is included in Appendix D.

Week 1: Introducing Skills

Week 2: Taking turns through the use of a T-Chart

Week 3: Sharing ideas and thoughts through the use of PMI

Week 4: Sharing materials through a role play

Week 5: Expressing encouragement through a Think-Pair-Share

Week 6: Using no put downs through a jigsaw

Week 7: Taking turns through a web/mind map

Week 8: Sharing ideas and thoughts through KWL Chart

Week 9: Sharing materials through team projects

Week 10: Expressing encouragement through the use of PMI

Week 11: Using no put downs through role play

Week 12: Taking turns using Think-Pair-Share

Week 13: Sharing ideas and thoughts using a Venn diagram

Week 14: Sharing materials through team projects

Week 15: Expressing encouragement through a jigsaw

Week 16: Using no put downs using web/mind map

B. Content Area Samples

1. In mathematics (grades 3 and 11), the five major social skills and various teaching strategies will be tied into the areas of algebra II and basic 3rd-grade math. In algebra, for example, a Venn Diagram will be used to compare/contrast the substitution and elimination methods for solving equations. The students will show their knowledge of these methods through their

diagrams which they have created by sharing ideas.

In 3rd-grade math, the students will be asked to work in groups to create a fraction pizza. The purpose is to improve the concept formation of fractions. In both areas, however, the groups will be assessed on their group participation. The sharing of ideas and materials, taking turns, and positive support and encouragement will be evaluated. The observation checklist will be used for evaluation. (See sample lessons, Appendixes E and F)

2. In science (grade 7), the five major social skills and various teaching strategies will be tied into the area of biology. For example, during the unit on the cell, each group will be asked to create a diorama. The groups will be assessed not only on their final product, but also on their individual contributions to the group. The skills evaluated will include: sharing ideas and materials, taking turns, and positive support and encouragement. The observation checklist will be used for evaluation. (See sample lesson, Appendix G)

3. In social studies (grades 10 and 11), the five major social skills and various teaching strategies will be tied into the areas of world and American history. For example, the students will be asked to create a skit which shows the area, important people, and hardships of a particular colony or civilization. In creating the skit, the students will be asked to demonstrate their knowledge of the content. In addition, the importance of sharing ideas and materials, taking turns, and positive support and encouragement while working in their groups will be stressed and evaluated. The observation checklist will be used for evaluation. (See sample lessons, Appendixes H and I)

3. TOOLS FOR ASSESSMENT

   A. Student Surveys (Appendix B)

   B. Group Processing Rubric (Appendix C)

   C. Teacher Observation Checklist (Appendix A)

   D. Teacher Journals

METHODS OF ASSESSMENT

In order to assess the effects of the interventions, group-processing rubrics and student surveys will be implemented throughout the program. Documentation of behaviors will be recorded in teacher journals and checklists.

The teachers will periodically record anecdotal notes in their journals. The journals will document observations pertaining to the areas of effective group functioning and the use of student social skills. These records will provide an opportunity for the researchers to revisit initial perceptions and to compare any changes in those perceptions.

The teacher observation checklist was devised by the researchers to document social behavior in the classroom. The purpose of the checklist is to assess the use of social skills while working in cooperative groups. The researchers will check for students taking turns, sharing thoughts and ideas, sharing materials, expressing encouragement (verbal and nonverbal) and expressing support (using no put downs). The checklist will log how frequently a student uses any of the five previously mentioned skills while participating in cooperative groups. These social behaviors will be observed during 32 cooperative learning activities and will be recorded.

Another method of assessment will be the student surveys. Students will indicate whether they strongly agreed, agreed,

disagreed or strongly disagreed that everyone in the group shared their thoughts and ideas with the rest of the group, shared materials, did not use put downs, gave positive comments to other group members and took turns speaking. The surveys will be distributed during the first, and fifth months of the study. The results will be tallied and compared to one another and recorded.

The final assessment that the researchers will use in the intervention will be a group-processing rubric (Appendix C). The rubric will be used after each cooperative learning activity. The results will be tallied and recorded.

CHAPTER 4

PROJECT RESULTS

Historical Description of Intervention

The overall objective of this project was to improve students' social skills to provide for effective group functioning. The action plan included the implementation of cooperative learning to be used with the targeted 3rd-, 7th-, 10th-, and 11th- grade students. The students were simultaneously engaged in a series of cooperative group experiences and activities designed to improve their social behavior while working in groups. Student surveys, group processing rubrics, teacher journals and teacher observation checklists were used to collect and record the data.

In the first phase of the action plan the researchers identified the problem through teacher observation checklists and student surveys (Appendixes A & B). The observation and evaluation data was collected during the first two weeks of the study among five classes involving 160 students. The researchers used the teacher observation checklists to record the use of the targeted social skills of randomly selected students. The student surveys allowed students to evaluate the effectiveness of their groups' functioning. The results collected reinforced the researchers' observations regarding students' general lack of social skills.

Cooperative learning was implemented within the targeted classrooms as an instructional technique to introduce and reinforce social skills. In order to reinforce the skills, subject matter lessons were modified to link the instruction of the five skills with the content objectives. The five targeted social skills were introduced to the students during the first week of the plan. The skills of taking turns, sharing thoughts and ideas, sharing materials, expressing encouragement, and using no put downs were reviewed and reinforced through a variety of cooperative group activities scheduled throughout the sixteen week period. Task groups consisted of 3-6 students of mixed gender, ability, and diverse backgrounds and were randomly chosen for the cooperative activities which took place at least twice a week from September through January. Group members were assigned roles of time keeper, recorder, reporter, facilitator, and materials manager in order to accomplish the lesson objective of the various content areas.

During cooperative group activities, the researchers interacted with the groups to encourage and reinforce the desired behaviors. Throughout the interaction researchers collected data using the teacher observation checklist. The teacher observation checklists were used with randomly selected students to record the average number of incidents of the targeted social skill. The researchers recorded the average number of incidents that the students used the targeted social skills in a forty minute class period. The data from the teacher observation checklists for each school were collected twice a week for an average period of forty minutes during the first two weeks. The researchers also kept anecdotal records using weekly journals to record student

progress.

Student surveys and group processing rubrics were used by the students to record their perceptions of social skills during the first and fifth months of the study. The group processing rubrics were used following each cooperative activity. Both instruments provided additional data to evaluate student progress.

For the most part, the action plan was followed at each of the five schools. However, a deviation occurred when School C had a teachers' strike which lasted for a two week period. Upon the conclusion of the strike, the action plan was resumed and continued for two weeks beyond the other schools. Another deviation occurred with the group processing rubric data. While the researchers utilized the group processing rubrics after each cooperative lesson, data was only analyzed three times: from the first assessment in September, another assessment in November and a final assessment in January.

Presentation and Analysis of Results

The teacher observation checklists were used to record the average number of incidents the targeted social skills were used by randomly selected students. The researchers recorded the average number of incidents that the students used the targeted social skills in a forty minute class period. The data from the teacher observation checklists for each school were collected twice a week for an average period of forty minutes during the first two weeks.

Figure 7 indicates that at each school there was positive growth in the use of social skills. The data from each school indicates that more incidents were recorded for each of the five targeted social skills which suggests that students' use of these

skills increased.

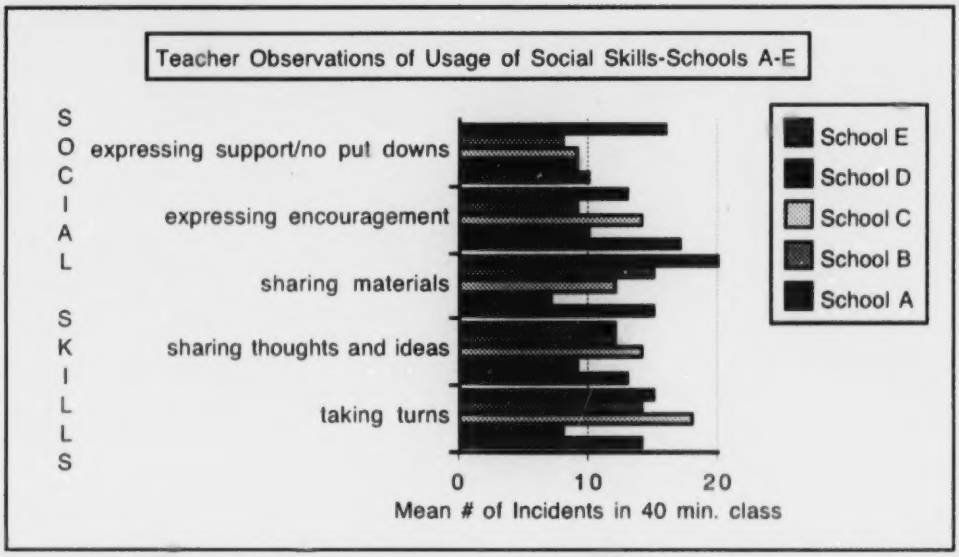

Figure 7: Teacher Observations of Incidents of Usage of Students' Social Skills-Schools A,B,C,D,E

The 160 students at the five targeted schools were asked to fill out student surveys to indicate whether they strongly agreed,agreed, disagreed, or strongly disagreed that no put downs were used while working in groups. Figure 8 indicates that, in School A,where 58 students participated in the project, that 12.1% strongly agreed, 51.7% agreed, 25.9% disagreed, and 10.3% strongly disagreed. In School B, where 27 students participated in the project, 55.6% strongly agreed, 18.5% agreed, 14.8% disagreed, 11.1% strongly disagreed. In School C, where 33 students participated in the project, 18.2% strongly agreed, 51.5% agreed, 0% disagreed, and 30.3% strongly disagreed. In School D, where 14 students participated in the project, 57.1% strongly agreed, 35.7% agreed, 7.1% disagreed, 0% strongly disagreed. In School E, where 28 students participated in the project, 14.3% strongly agreed, 67.9% agreed, 10.7% disagreed, and 7.1% strongly disagreed. Of the 160 students surveyed in January, 72.5% agreed that using no

put downs occurs within their group. In September, 51% agreed that using no put downs occurred within their group.

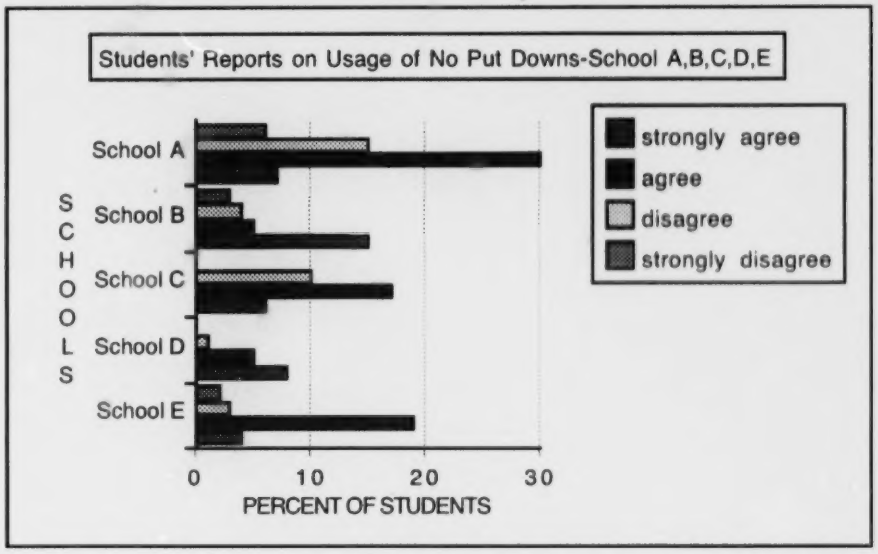

Figure 8: Students' Reports on Usage of No Put Downs-Schools A, B, C, D, E-January, 1997.

The 160 students at the five targeted schools were asked to fill out student surveys to indicate whether they strongly agreed, agreed, disagreed, or strongly disagreed that encouragement was expressed while working in groups. Figure 9 indicates that, in School A, where 58 students participated in the project, 5.2% strongly agreed, 65.5% agreed, 27.6% disagreed, and 1.7% strongly disagreed. In School B, where 27 students participated in the project, 37% strongly agreed, 52% agreed, 7.3% disagreed, 3.7% strongly disagreed. In School C, where 33 students participated in the project, 12.1% strongly agreed, 45.5% agreed, 6% disagreed, and 36.4% strongly disagreed. In School D, where 14 students participated in the project, 42.9% strongly agreed, 50% agreed, 7.1% disagreed, 0% strongly disagreed. In School E, where 28 students participated in the project, 14.3% strongly agreed, 35.7% agreed, 21.4% disagreed, and 28.6% strongly disagreed. Of the 160

students surveyed in January, 75% agreed that encouragement was expressed within their group. In September, 52.5% agreed that encouragement was expressed within their group.

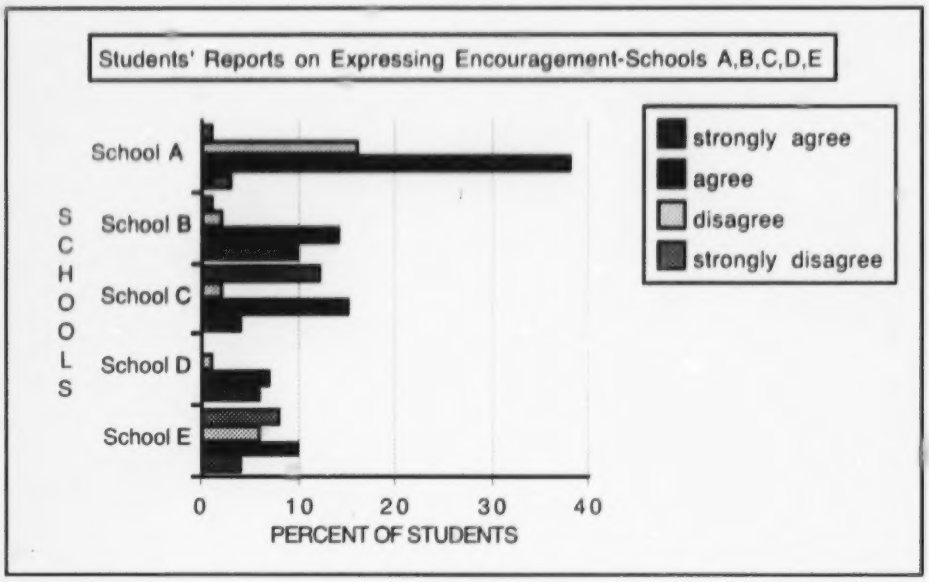

Figure 9: Students' Reports on Expressing Encouragement-Schools A, B, C, D, E-January, 1997.

The 160 students at the five targeted schools were asked to fill out student surveys to indicate whether they strongly agreed, agreed, disagreed, or strongly disagreed that materials were shared while working in groups. Figure 10 indicates that, in School A, where 58 students participated in the project, 15.5% strongly agreed, 75.9% agreed, 0% disagreed, and 8.6% strongly disagreed. In School B, where 27 students participated in the project, 33.3% strongly agreed, 59.3% agreed, 7.4% disagreed, 0% strongly disagreed. In School C, where 33 students participated in the project, 24.2% strongly agreed, 60.6% agreed, 3.1% disagreed, and 12.1% strongly disagreed. In School D, where 14 students participated in the project, 50% strongly agreed, 42.9%

agreed, 7.1% disagreed, 0% strongly disagreed. In School E, where 28 students participated in the project, 17.9% strongly agreed, 39.3% agreed, 10.7% disagreed, and 32.1% strongly disagreed. Of the 160 students surveyed in January, 84% agreed that sharing materials occurs within their group. In September, 35% agreed that sharing materials occurred within their group.

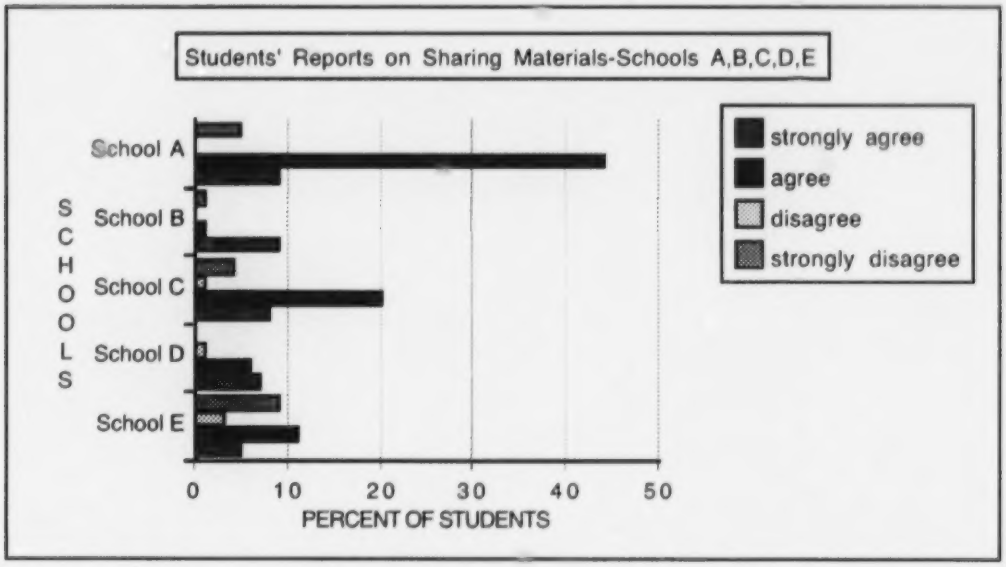

Figure 10: Students' Reports on Sharing Materials-Schools A, B, C, D, E-January, 1997.

The 160 students at the five targeted schools were asked to fill out student surveys to indicate whether they strongly agreed, agreed, disagreed, or strongly disagreed that thoughts and ideas were shared while working in groups. Figure 11 indicates that, in School A, where students participated in the project, 5.2% strongly agreed, 62% agreed, 3.4% disagreed, and 29.3% strongly disagreed. In School B, where 27 students participated in the project, 22.2% strongly agreed, 70.4% agreed, 3.7% disagreed, 3.7% strongly disagreed. In School C, where 33 students participated

in the project, 18.2% strongly agreed, 57.6% agreed, 6.1% disagreed, and 18.1% strongly disagreed. In School D, where 14 students participated in the project, 50% strongly agreed, 50% agreed, 0% disagreed, 0% strongly disagreed. In School E, where 28 students participated in the project, 14.3% strongly agreed, 53.6% agreed, 3.5% disagreed, and 28.6% strongly disagreed. Of the 160 students surveyed in January, 76.3% agreed that sharing occurs within their group. In September 69% agreed that sharing occurred within their group.

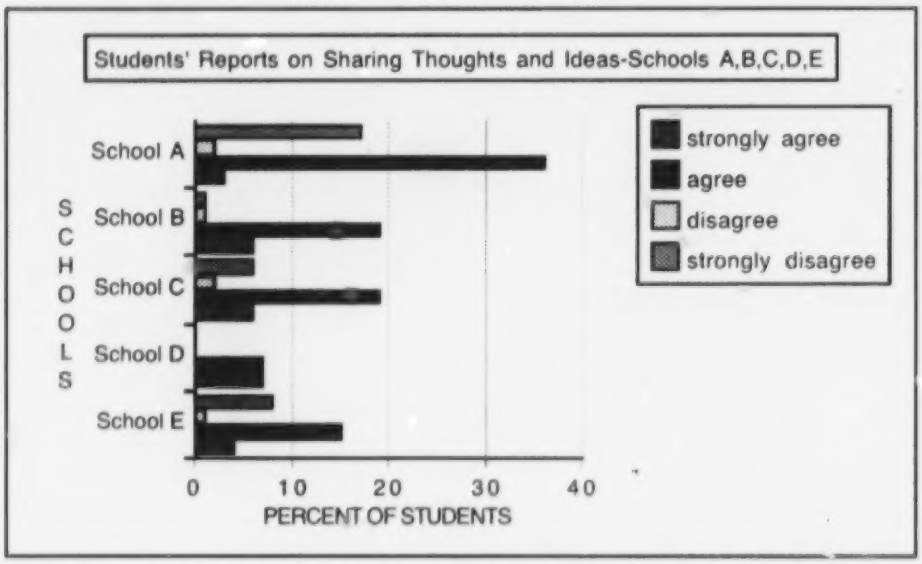

Figure 11: Students' Reports on Sharing Thoughts and Ideas-Schools A, B, C, D, E-January, 1997.

The 160 students at the five targeted schools were asked to fill out student surveys to indicate whether they strongly agreed, agreed, disagreed, or strongly disagreed that students were taking turns while working in groups. Figure 12 shows, that in School A, where 58 students participated in the project, 9% strongly agreed, 65% agreed, 5% disagreed, and 21% strongly disagreed. In School

B, where 27 students participated in the project, 26% strongly agreed, 70.3% agreed, 0% disagreed, 3.7% strongly disagreed. In School C, where 33 students participated in the project, 27.2% strongly agreed, 60.6% agreed, 6.1% disagreed, and 6.1% strongly disagreed. In School D, where 14 students participated in the project, 57% strongly agreed, 36% agreed, 0% disagreed, 7% strongly disagreed. In School E, where 28 students participated in the project, 18% strongly agreed, 64.3% agreed, 7% disagreed, and 10.7% strongly disagreed. Of the 160 students surveyed in September, 63% reported that the students take turns within their groups. In January, 84% reported that the students take turns within their groups.

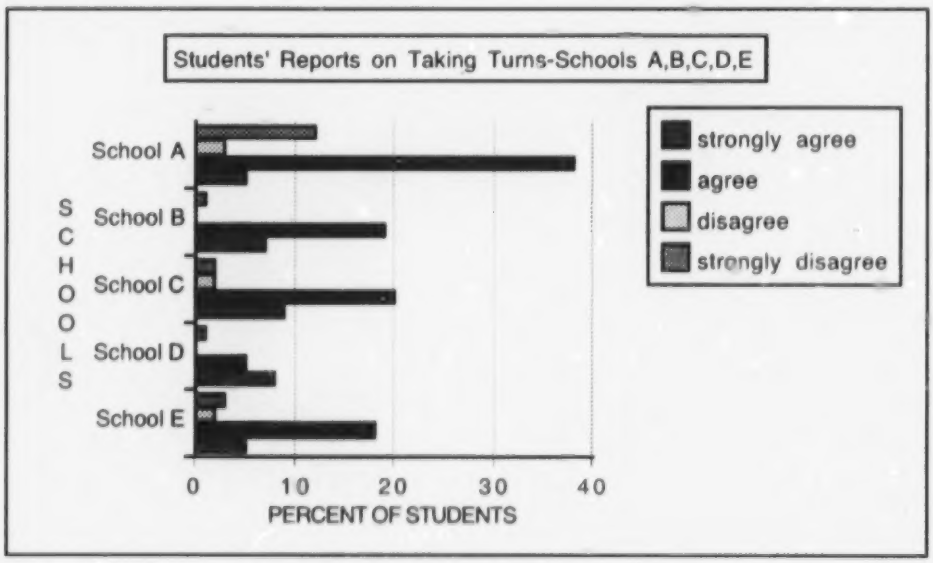

Figure 12: Students' Reports on Taking Turns-Schools A,B,C,D,E - January, 1997.

Analysis of the data collected and recorded from September and January indicates that the targeted students have made

substantial gains in the areas of taking turns, sharing thoughts and ideas, sharing materials, expressing encouragement, and using no put downs. The skills that showed the largest improvement was using no put downs and sharing materials with an increase of over 97%. Data from all five schools showed at least a 44% increase in the use of all the skills.

At the conclusion of each cooperative group activity, group processing rubrics were distributed to students for a group evaluation of the use of the five targeted skills. At four of the schools, students were asked to rate their group on each skill using a range of "0" to "3" with "3" indicating positive demonstration of the skill and "0" indicating that students saw a need for improvement in this skill. At School A, students were asked to rate their group on each skill using a range of "1" to "3" with "3" indicating positive demonstration of the skill and "1" indicating that students saw a need for improvement in this skill. Although data was collected after each cooperative learning activity the researchers analyzed and recorded the data from only the first cooperative learning activities in September, November and January. Results of the data are recorded in Tables 1 through 5.

Table 1: Group Processing Rubrics - School A

	September Assessment		
Social Skill	No.of Students Responding "3"	No.of Students Responding "2"	No.of Students Responding "1"
taking turns	4	34	20
sharing thoughts and ideas	12	32	14
sharing materials	32	23	03
expressing encouragement	09	27	22

Table 1: Group Processing Rubrics - School A continued

November Assessment

Social Skill	No.of Students Responding "3"	No.of Students Responding "2"	No.of Students Responding "1"
taking turns	10	38	10
sharing thoughts and ideas	14	34	10
sharing materials	35	17	06
expressing encouragement	15	30	13

January Assessment

Social Skill	No.of Students Responding "3"	No.of Students Responding "2"	No.of Students Responding "1"
taking turn	18	34	06
sharing thoughts and ideas	23	27	08
sharing materials	45	10	03
expressing encouragement	26	27	06

The results of the group processing rubrics for School A, as recorded in Table 1, show a substantial improvement in student social skills throughout the implementation of the project. The results of the September group processing rubric show that 7% of the students felt that they took turns and 21% of the students felt that they shared thoughts and ideas. The results also indicated 55% of the students shared materials, and 16% of the students expressed encouragement.

During the month of November, a positive rise in all of the social skills was documented. Taking turns and expressing encouragement showed the greatest improvement with a 10% increase. Sharing materials and sharing thoughts and ideas also showed an

increase of approximately 4%.

In the final assessment all of the social skills showed a positive increase in usage. By January, 31% of the students felt that their cooperative groups were effectively taking turns and 40% of the students felt that their groups were successfully sharing thoughts and ideas. Positive growth in sharing materials was shown by 78% of the students. Expressing encouragement was the social skill that the students felt had improved the most. At the beginning of the study only 16% of the students felt encouragement was being expressed. By the end of the study this percentage increased to 45%.

Table 2: Group Processing Rubrics - School B

September Assessment

Social Skill	No. of Students Responding "3"	No. of Students Responding "2"	No. of Students Responding "1"	No.of Students Responding "0"
taking turns	12	04	06	05
sharing thoughts and ideas	12	04	07	04
sharing materials	13	05	04	05
expressing encouragement	05	07	05	10
expressing support (no put downs)	09	04	05	09

Table 2: Group Processing Rubrics - School B continued

November Assessment

Social Skill	No. of Students Responding "3"	No. of Students Responding "2"	No. of Students Responding "1"	No.of Students Responding "0"
taking turns	21	04	01	01
sharing thoughts and ideas	14	02	09	02
sharing materials	21	03	01	01
expressing encouragement	16	04	02	05
expressing support (no put downs)	14	04	03	06

January Assessment

Social Skill	No. of Students Responding "3"	No. of Students Responding "2"	No. of Students Responding "1"	No. of Students Responding "0"
taking turns	25	02	0	0
sharing thoughts and ideas	18	04	05	0
sharing materials	23	03	01	0
expressing encouragement	20	03	02	02
expressing support (no put downs)	18	03	03	03

The results of the group processing rubrics for School B, as documented in Table 2, show a substantial improvement in student social skills throughout the implementation of the project. The results of the September group processing rubric show that 44% of the students felt that they took turns and 44% of the students

felt that they shared thoughts and ideas. The results also indicated 48% of the students shared materials, and 19% of the students expressed encouragement and 33% of the students expressed support.

During the month of November, a positive rise in all of the social skills was documented. Expressing encouragement showed the greatest improvement with a 40% increase. Taking turns and sharing materials also showed an increase of approximately 32%.

In the final assessment all of the social skills showed a positive increase in usage. By January, 93% of the students felt that their cooperative groups were effectively taking turns and 67% of the students felt that their groups were successfully sharing thoughts and ideas. By January, 85% of the students reported that their groups were sharing materials. At the beginning of the study only 19% of the students felt encouragement was being expressed. By the end of the study this percentage increased to 74%.

Table 3: Group Processing Rubrics - School C

September Assessment

Social Skill	No. of Students Responding "3"	No. of Students Responding "2"	No. of Students Responding "1"	No. of Students Responding "0"
taking turns	12	08	05	05
sharing thoughts and ideas	11	04	09	06
sharing materials	09	08	08	05
expressing encouragement	14	04	07	05
expressing support (no put downs)	10	03	11	06

Table 3: Group Processing Rubrics - School C continued

November Assessment

Social Skill	No. of Students Responding "3"	No. of Students Responding "2"	No. of Students Responding "1"	No. of Students Responding "0"
taking turns	18	05	02	04
sharing thoughts and ideas	16	05	06	03
sharing materials	17	05	03	05
expressing encouragement	18	08	02	02
expressing support (no put downs)	14	07	05	04

January Assessment

Social Skill	No. of Students Responding "3"	No. of Students Responding "2"	No. of Students Responding "1"	No. of Students Responding "0"
taking turns	25	04	01	0
sharing thoughts and ideas	24	03	03	0
sharing materials	23	03	03	01
expressing encouragement	25	03	02	0
expressing support (no put downs)	25	03	02	0

The results of the group processing rubrics for School C, as documented in Table 3, show a substantial improvement in student social skills throughout the implementation of the project. The results of the September group processing rubric show that 40% of the students felt that they took turns and 37% of the students

felt that they shared thoughts and ideas. The results also indicated 30% of the students shared materials, and 47% of the students expressed encouragement and 33% of the students expressed support.

During the month of November, a positive increase in all of the social skills was documented. Sharing materials showed the greatest improvement with a 27% increase. Taking turns also showed an increase of approximately 20%.

In the final assessment, all of the social skills showed an increase in usage. By January, 83% of the students felt that their cooperative groups were effectively taking turns and 80% of the students felt that their groups were successfully sharing thoughts and ideas. Positive growth was shown in sharing materials and expressing encouragement by 80% of the students. Expressing support was the social skill reported by the students to have made the largest improvement. At the beginning of the study only 33% of the students felt encouragement was being expressed. By the end of the study this had increased to 83%.

Table 4: Group Processing Rubrics - School D
September Assessment

Social Skill	No. of Students Responding "3"	No. of Students Responding "2"	No. of Students Responding "1"	No. of Students Responding "0"
taking turns	05	0	09	0
sharing thoughts and ideas	05	05	04	0
sharing materials	10	0	04	0
expressing encouragement	0	05	09	0
expressing support (no put downs)	0	05	05	04

Table 4: Group Processing Rubrics - School D continued

November Assessment

Social Skill	No. of Students Responding "3"	No. of Students Responding "2"	No. of Students Responding "1"	No. of Students Responding "0"
taking turns	09	05	0	0
sharing thoughts and ideas	11	02	01	0
sharing materials	13	01	0	0
expressing encouragement	10	0	02	02
expressing support (no put downs)	10	0	02	02

January Assessment

Social Skill	No. of Students Responding "3"	No. of Students Responding "2"	No. o Students Responding "1"	No. of Students Responding "0"
taking turns	11	03	0	0
sharing thoughts and ideas	11	02	01	0
sharing materials	12	02	0	0
expressing encouragement	11	02	01	0
expressing support (no put downs)	10	03	01	0

The results of the group processing rubrics for School D, as documented in Table 4, show a substantial improvement in student social skills throughout the implementation of the project. The results of the September group processing rubric show that 36% of the students felt that they took turns and 36% of the students felt that they shared thoughts and ideas. The results also

indicated 71% of the students shared materials, and 0% of the students expressed encouragement and 0% of the students expressed support.

During the month of November, an increase in all of the social skills was documented. Expressing encouragement and expressing support were the skills that students reported to have improved the most--both by 77%. Sharing thoughts and ideas also showed an increase of approximately 43%.

In the final assessment all of the social skills showed an increase in usage. By January, 79% of the students felt that their cooperative groups were effectively taking turns and 79% of the students felt that their groups were successfully sharing thoughts and ideas. Positive growth was shown in sharing materials and expressing support by 79% of the students. Expressing encouragement was the social skill that showed the largest improvement. At the beginning of the study none of the students felt encouragement was being expressed. By the end of the study this percentage increased to 79%.

Table 5: Group Processing Rubrics - School E
September Assessment

Social Skill	No. of Students Responding "3"	No. of Students Responding "2"	No. of Students Responding "1"	No. of Students Responding "0"
taking turns	14	05	05	04
sharing thoughts and ideas	13	02	07	06
sharing materials	10	05	08	05
expressing encouragement	14	04	06	04
expressing support (no put downs)	11	02	09	09

Table 5: Group Processing Rubrics - School E continued

November Assessment

Social Skill	No. of Students Responding "3"	No. of Students Responding "2"	No. o Students Responding "1"	No. of Students Responding "0"
taking turns	20	03	02	01
sharing thoughts and ideas	18	05	03	02
sharing materials	17	03	05	03
expressing encouragement	20	04	02	02
expressing support (no put downs)	14	05	05	04

January Assessment

Social Skill	No. of Students Responding "3"	No. of Students Responding "2"	No. of Students Responding "1"	No. of Students Responding "0"
taking turns	25	02	01	0
sharing thoughts and ideas	23	03	02	0
sharing materials	24	01	03	0
expressing encouragement	23	05	01	0
expressing support (no put downs)	22	03	02	01

The results of the group processing rubrics for School E, as documented in Table 5, show a substantial improvement in student social skills throughout the implementation of the action plan. The results of the September group processing rubric show that 50% of the students felt that they took turns and 46% of the students felt that they shared thoughts and ideas. The results also

indicated 36% of the students shared materials, and 50% of the students expressed encouragement and 39% of the students expressed support.

During the month of November, an increase in all of the social skills was documented. Students reported that sharing materials showed the greatest improvement with a 25% increase. Taking turns and expressing encouragement also showed an increase of approximately 21%.

In the final assessment all of the social skills increased in usage. By January, 89% of the students felt that their cooperative groups were effectively taking turns and 82% of the students felt that their groups were successfully sharing thoughts and ideas. By January, 81% of the students reported that groups were expressing encouragement and support. The largest increase in the reported use of social skills was in sharing materials. At the beginning of the study, only 36% of the students reported the sharing of materials. By the end of the study, student reports of this skill indicated that the percentage increased to 86%.

The data from the group processing rubrics which were recorded and analyzed from the first cooperative learning activities from September, November, and January indicate substantial improvements in students' social skills at all five schools. Students' evaluation of their group functioning show positive growth and development of the five targeted social skills.

Another method of assessment was teacher observation checklists. The teacher observation checklists were used to record the average number of incidents the targeted social skills were used by randomly selected students. The researchers recorded

the average number of incidents that the students used the targeted social skills in a forty minute class period. The data from the teacher observation checklists for each school were collected twice a week for an average period of forty minutes during the first two weeks. Analysis of this data from September through January showed student growth in all five targeted social skills. However, in comparison to the student surveys, the teacher observation checklists indicated an inconsistency with the students' self evaluation. The students reported their use of the social skills more favorably than the researchers. Expressing encouragement and using no put downs were the two areas which showed the greatest inconsistencies.

The final method of assessment was teacher journals. Anecdotal records in the form of teacher journals were used to record the researchers observations of and reactions to cooperative lessons. Analysis of these records indicated an increase in diverse students' ability to cooperate with others in a group setting. This was exemplified at Schools B, C and E where students who typically socialize with other students of their same ethnic or economic status were more willing to work with a heterogeneous cooperative group. A review of these records is consistent with other data which show an increase in positive social interactions. At Schools A and D, spontaneous and enthusiastic expressions of encouragement were observed. Teacher journals from September do not indicate a prevalence of these types of expressions. A review of journal entries from the last two months indicates that students were expressing support and encouragement in more spontaneous and enthusiastic ways. A willingness of students to share thoughts and ideas and express

support to a group of individuals with whom they had not previously been associated with was also observed at all five schools. A review of teacher anecdotal journals indicates that by the end of the implementation of cooperative learning, students' social skills had improved and the classroom environment was, on the whole, more positive.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Cooperative learning was the intervention implemented by the researchers to improve the targeted social skills in 3rd-, 7th-, 10th-, and 11th- grade students. Over a period of five months, from September, 1996 to January, 1997, the intervention produced remarkable results, as shown through the data collected from the student surveys, teacher observation checklists, and group processing rubrics. A review of teacher journals verified student growth.

Student surveys, teacher observation checklists, teacher journals, and group processing rubrics provided the needed data at all levels. The researchers believe these findings indicate that the targeted students have made substantial gains in the areas of taking turns, sharing thoughts and ideas, sharing materials, expressing encouragement, and using no put downs. Student growth is evident in the interpretation of this data. The social skills of using no put downs and sharing materials showed the largest improvement with an increase of over 97%. All five schools showed at least a 44% increase in the use of all of the targeted skills, with schools C and E showing over a 120% increase. The researchers conclude that the implementation of cooperative learning is most likely responsible for these results.

The researchers contend that as a result of the

implementation of cooperative learning, students from the targeted classes did increase their abilities to function effectively in a group. The researchers found, as did Brandt (1987); Hauserman (1992); Johnson & Johnson (1990); Leming (1993); Slavin (1991); and Wynne & Walberg (1985) that students' attitudes became more positive and peer relationships improved. The literature also indicated, as did the researchers data, that racial and/or ethnic relations improved. Johnson & Johnson (1990) and Slavin (1991) indicated that the implementation of cooperative learning encouraged politeness, tact, loyalty and other virtues. The teacher journals at Schools C, D and E, from the last three weeks of the project, indicated that this was indeed true and they recorded a more positive environment in the classroom.

The researchers highly recommend the implementation of cooperative learning to improve students' social skills and to provide for effective group functioning. The literature-based research indicated the problem of students' lack of social skills and suggested these skills be taught within the school setting. The researchers included cooperative group activities, discussions, modeling, and evaluation of the use of social skills in the curriculum. Following a set plan, reviewing each social skill before and after the activity, and student evaluation of their groups' functioning were key factors in the success of the project. The researchers found that the schools with the greatest ethnic and economic diversity showed the biggest increases in social skills.

However, the researchers found that including five social skills was cumbersome at times. The students at the lower grade levels had difficulty distinguishing between sharing materials and

sharing thoughts and ideas. Expressing encouragement was often confused with using no put downs. A combination of these skills, and a selection of two to three skills may be an easier strategy.

Schools A, C and E showed the greatest improvement in four out of five social skills, as well as, the greatest improvement overall. In the beginning of the study, the students at Schools A, C and E demonstrated the least number of positive social skills. The treatment was most effective in schools with the lowest level of social skills. Students who began the year possessing high levels of social skills did not show as great a gain. Students who started out with the least gained the most.

In conclusion, cooperative learning was found to be an effective strategy to improve group functioning and student social skills at all grade levels. The data indicate that the social skills of students of all ages, ethnic backgrounds, and socioeconomic levels improve with the addition of cooperative learning in the curriculum.

REFERENCES

Bailey, B. (1995). Keeping the dialogue open: Parents and educators working together. Schools In The Middle, 35-36.

Brandt, R. (1987). On cooperation in schools: A conversation with David and Roger Johnson. Educational Leadership, 45, 14-19.

Comer, J. (1986). Parent participation in the schools. Phi Delta Kappan, 442-446.

Dick, K. (1991). Cooperative learning master the bundle of sticks. Childhood Education, 67, 179.

Elias, M., & Clabby, J. (1988). Teaching social decision making. Educational Leadership, 45, 52-55.

Glasser, W. (1990). The Quality School. New York, NY: Harper Collins Publishers, Inc.

Hauserman, Cal (1992). Contemporary Education, 63, 185-190.

James, William H. & Lessany-Abdi, Deborah K. (1982). A comparative analysis of social behaviors of gifted and non-gifted preschool children. Research Report. 143.

Johnson, D., & Johnson, R. (1990). Social skills for successful group work. Educational Leadership, 47, 29-33.

Johnson, D., Johnson, R., & Holubec, E. (1990). Circles of Learning. (3rd ed.). Edina, MN: Interaction.

Johnson, D., Johnson, R., & Holubec, E. (1993). Cooperation in the Classroom. (6th ed.). Edina, MN: Interaction.

Johnston, J. (1995, November/December). Climate building a culture of achievement. Schools In The Middle, 10-15.

Kirschenbaum, H. (1992). A comprehensive model for values education and morals education. Phi Delta Kappan, 73, 771-776.

Kohn, A. (1991). Caring kids: The role of the schools. Phi Delta Kappan, 72, 496-506.

Lasley, T. (1987). Teaching selflessness in a selfish society. Phi Delta Kappan, 664-678.

Leming, J. (1993). In search of effective character education. Educational Leadership, 63-71.

Parrenas, F., & Salazar, C. (1990). Cooperative learning multicultural functioning and student achievement. Cooperative Learning, 16-24.

Pirrello, K. (1994). Improving student social skills through cooperative learning and the second step violence-prevention curriculum. Unpublished master's thesis, St. Xavier University, Chicago, Illinois.

Safeguarding kids-from each other. (1996, June 29). Chicago Tribune, p. 1-20.

Schaps, E., & Solomon, D. (1990). Schools and classrooms as caring communities. Educational Leadership, 48, 38-42.

Schaps, E., Solomon, D., & Watson, M. (1985/1986). A program that combines character development and academic achievement. Educational Leadership, 43, 33-35.

Slavin, R. (1990). Research on cooperative learning: Consensus and controversy. Educational Leadership, 52-54.

Slavin, R. (1991). Synthesis of research on cooperative learning. Educational Leadership, 48, 71-82.

Tracy, J. (1995). Family: involving families in student achievement. Schools In The Middle, 31-36.

Wayne, E. (1985/1986). The great tradition in education: transmitting moral values. Educational Leadership, 43, 4-14.

Wynne, E., & Walberg, H. (1985/1986). Complementary goals of character development and academic excellence. Educational Leadership, 43, 15-18.

APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

Directions: Select the skills you want to observe and write them on the five slanted lines at the top.

OBSERVATION CHECK LIST

Dates: _____
Class: _____
Teacher: _____

Who	Skill 1: taking turns	Skill 2: sharing thoughts and ideas	Skill 3: sharing materials	Skill 4: expressing encouragement (verbal & nonverbal)	Skill 5: expressing support/no put downs	Celebrations
1.						
2.						
3.						
4.						
5.						
6.						
7.						
8.						
9.						
10.						

COMMENTS:

APPENDIX B

STUDENT SURVEY

Please respond to the following statements. Indicate your response by circling one of the following for each statement.

A= strongly disagree, B= disagree, C= strongly agree, D= agree

1. Everyone in the group participated equally.

A= strongly disagree, B= disagree, C= strongly agree, D= agree

2. Everyone in the group had a chance to share their thoughts and ideas with the rest of the group.

A= strongly disagree, B= disagree, C= strongly agree, D= agree

3. Everyone shared materials.

A= strongly disagree, B= disagree, C= strongly agree, D= agree

4. No put downs were used in the group.

A= strongly disagree, B= disagree, C= strongly agree, D= agree

5. Positive comments were given to other group members.

A= strongly disagree, B= disagree, C= strongly agree, D= agree

APPENDIX B

Please answer the following questions. Circle a for yes, a for sometimes, and a for no.

1. Everyone in the group participated equally.

2. Everyone in the group had a chance the share their thoughts and ideas with the rest of the group.

3. Everyone shared materials.

4. No put downs were used.

5. Positive comments were given to other group members.

6. Everyone took turns speaking.

GROUP PROCESSING RUBRIC

EVALUATION	- 3 -	- 2 -	- 1 -	- 0 -
TAKING TURNS	•everyone took a turn	•one group member did not take a turn	•some group members did not take a turn	•one person monopolized the group
SHARING THOUGHTS AND IDEAS	•all group members' ideas and thoughts were encouraged and well explored	•one group member's ideas and thoughts were encouraged and well explored	•some group members' ideas and thoughts were encouraged and well explored	•one person's thoughts and ideas dominated the group
SHARING MATERIALS	•materials were shared by everyone	•one group member did not have access to materials	•some group members did not have access to materials	•one person controlled all the materials
EXPRESSING ENCOURAGEMENT (VERBAL OR NONVERBAL)	•all group members were encouraged about their contributions	•one group member was not encouraged about their contributions	•some group members were not encouraged about their contributions	•no one was encouraged
EXPRESSING SUPPORT (NO PUT DOWNS)	•group members gave supportive, helpful suggestions and/or feedback	•gave supportive, helpful suggestions and/or feedback to most group members	•a few suggestions or comments were negative	•many comments were negative

GROUP PROCESSING RUBRIC

WE DESERVE A CERTIFICATE!	WE DESERVE A BLUE RIBBON!!!	WE DESERVE A CROWN!!!!!
TAKING TURNS		
- 1 -	- 2 -	- 3 -
one person involved	two people involved	whole group involved
SHARING THOUGHTS AND IDEAS		
- 1 -	- 2 -	- 3 -
little interaction	some interaction	whole group interaction
SHARING MATERIALS		
- 1 -	- 2 -	- 3 -
no one shared	some shared	everyone shared
EXPRESSING ENCOURAGEMENT/NO PUT DOWNS		
- 1 -	- 2 -	- 3 -
no one encouraged others	some encouraged others	everyone encouraged each other
many put downs	some put downs	no put downs

APPENDIX D

EXPLANATION OF COOPERATIVE ACTIVITIES AND GRAPHIC ORGANIZERS

1. T-Chart: A graphic organizer applicable to every cooperative skill which helps students understand the specific behaviors that make up a chosen social skill. Instead of dealing with abstract words such as encouragement or attentive listening, the students work with specific behaviors. What does encouragement look like? What does it sound like?
2. PMI: For affective processing, a PMI is used to talk about the pluses and minuses the students felt about the lesson: P stands for what the students liked, M what the students did not like, I for the interesting events, thoughts, or ideas the students had during the lesson.
3. Role play: A structured group experience or a story that illustrates the social skill lesson.
4. Think-pair-share: This activity allows students to think about a chosen topic, pair with a partner, and share thoughts and ideas.
5. Jigsaw: A structured group experience in which the students learn and teach a specific part of the material to the whole group.
6. Web/Mind Map:A graphic organizer which focuses on a central idea/topic used to brainstorm or link related information.
7. KWL: A strategy which helps with pre-lesson diagnoses. This graphic organizer invites students to list all they know about a topic in the first column, and all they want to know about a topic in the second column. At the end of the unit, students are able to list what they have learned in the third column.
8. Team Projects: A short or long term activity which allows students to work in small groups to complete a specific task.

APPENDIX D

9. Venn Diagram: A graphic organizer used to help students compare/contrast likenesses and differences in two or more objects, characters or situations.

APPENDIX E

Subject: Mathematics

Lesson: Fraction Action

Grade Level: 3rd Grade

Materials Needed: Markers, order forms, pizza bottoms, rulers

Objective: Students will be able to divide a whole into equal parts, such as halves, thirds, and fourths. Students will be able to identify equivalent fractions. Students will create (correctly) a pizza from a given order.

Activity: After discussing what a fraction is and giving examples students are asked to divide certain objects into equal parts. Once they are comfortable with this, we discuss when and where they have heard about fractions and when to use them. The majority of the students respond with some type of baking answer and I expand on that by discussing pizza and ordering it. Finally, I explain that orders have been taken from various families and it the students job - in their groups - to create a pizza to fit the order they are given. Each group is given enough time to divide the pizza into equal parts and color and decorate it according to the order form. For example, the Jones family ordered 1/4 onions, 1/4 green peppers and 2/4 pepperoni. Therefore, their pizza should be divided into four equal parts, 1 section with onions on it, 1 section with green peppers on it, and 2 sections with pepperoni on it. Students should also be aware and able to see that 2/4 is equivalent to 1/2 at this point. Once each group is finished, they are asked to present their pizza to the class with an explanation of what they did and why and the rest of the class is asked to check their work.

Conclusion: This activity is a wonderful hands-on activity to get

APPENDIX E

all students involved with their group and display a clear understanding of fractions.

APPENDIX F

Subject: Algebra 2

Lesson: Substitution/Elimination Venn Diagram

Grade Level: 10th

Materials Needed: Textbook, notes, blank copy of a venn-diagram

Objective: The students will create a venn-diagram to illustrate their understanding of the two methods used to solve systems of equations.

Activity: The students will work in their cooperative groups to create their venn-diagram. We have used this type of graphic organizer before in class so the students already knew what information to put into the venn. Therefore, the students were instructed to use their notes, textbooks and prior knowledge and construct a venn-diagram which illustrated the similarities and differences between the two solution methods we have been discussing. They were given approximately fifteen to twenty minutes to accomplish this task. Then, the groups shared their graphic organizer with the class. Their was a class discussion and one venn-diagram was created from all the information obtained from each group's creation.

Conclusion: This was a great activity because it clearly showed the students' understanding of the substitution and elimination methods of solving equations.

APPENDIX G

Subject: Biological Science

Lesson: The Parts of Cells

Grade Level: 7th

Materials Needed: Two shoe boxes, colored paper, scissors, tape, and glue. Students may wish to add extra material that they can supply on their own.

Objective: To promote the effective use of the five major social skills while enhancing our knowledge of the cell.

Activity: The students will work in their groups in order to create a diorama of both a plant and animal cell. Group sizes will vary from two to four people depending on the class size. The diorama will be made of each cell in a shoe box and must include all of the cell parts. All cell parts should be represented and clearly labeled. The students will be given two forty minute class periods to complete this project.

Prior to starting the lesson it will be important to review specific social skills. During the actual working time on this project the student social skills will be monitored.

Conclusion: At the conclusion of this lesson the students will display their diorama's. Students will also evaluate their group social skills by completing a group processing rubric. The rubric will serve as a tool for recording data on social skills.

APPENDIX H

SUBJECT: United States History

LESSON: The Colonies

GRADE LEVEL: 11th Grade

MATERIALS NEEDED: Paper, scissors, tape, markers. Students may also wish to implement other various props into their skit.

OBJECTIVE/PURPOSE: To promote the effective use of the five targeted social skills while demonstrating knowledge of the Colonial period.

ACTIVITY: The students will work in their groups in order to create a skit.

Group sizes vary from four to five people depending on class size. Each group will demonstrate their knowledge of a particular colony through the skit. The information should include the geography, leaders, economic activity, hardships, and other unique aspects of the colony. The students will be given forty five minutes to prepare the skit. Any materials or props may be used.

Prior to starting the lesson it will be important to review the specific social skills. During the actual working time on this project the social skills will be monitored.

CONCLUSION: At the conclusion of this lesson, the students will present their skit to the whole group. Student's will also evaluate their group's social skills by completing a group processing rubric. The rubric will serve as a tool for recording data on social skills.

APPENDIX I

SUBJECT: Western Civilization

LESSON: Civilizations

GRADE LEVEL: 10th Grade

MATERIALS NEEDED: Paper, scissors, tape, markers. Students may also wish to implement other various props into their skit.

OBJECTIVE/PURPOSE: To promote the effective use of the five targeted social skills while demonstrating knowledge of civilizations.

ACTIVITY: The students will work in their groups in order to create a skit.

Group sizes vary from four to five people depending on class size. Each group will demonstrate their knowledge of a particular civilization through the skit. The information should include the geography, leaders, economic activity, hardships, and other unique aspects of the civilization. The students will be given forty five minutes to prepare the skit. Any materials or props may be used.

Prior to starting the lesson it will be important to review the specific social skills. During the actual working time on this project the social skills will be monitored.

CONCLUSION: At the conclusion of this lesson, the students will present their skit to the whole group. Student's will also evaluate their group's social skills by completing a group processing rubric. The rubric will serve as a tool for recording data on social skills.